



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL**  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

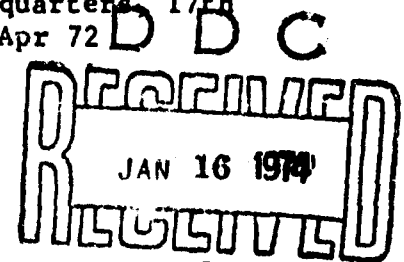
IN REPLY REFER TO

DAAG-PAP-A (M) (13 Dec 73) DAMO-ODU

14 January 1974

Expires 14 January 1975

**SUBJECT:** Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 17th  
 Aviation Group (CBT) for Period Ending 30 Apr 72



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1. The attached report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with para 4b, AR 525-15.
2. The information contained in this report is provided to insure that lessons learned during current operations are used to the benefit of future operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material, as appropriate. This report should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.
3. Information of actions initiated as a result of your evaluation should be forwarded to HQDA (DAMO ODU) Washington, DC 20310, within 90 days of receipt of this letter.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

VERNE L. BOWERS  
 Major General, USA  
 The Adjutant General

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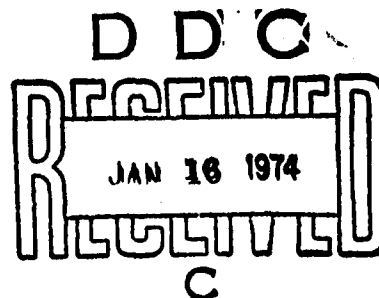
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WDM-00 (15 May 72)

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned at Headquarters, 17th  
Aviation Group (CMT) for Period Ending 30 April 1972, RCS CSFOR-65



Section II, Lessons Learned: Commanders Observation, Evaluation and  
Recommendations:

A. Personnel:

1. Observation: Keystone personnel reassignment criteria changed  
5 days prior to completion of unit standdowns.

2. Evaluation: Changing the curtailment policy after a number of  
personnel in various stand down units had proceeded to new assignments  
created a severe morale problem for those men forced to remain. Many men  
with nine to ten months service in Vietnam who were slow in receiving  
orders or were required for the entire standdown of their assigned units  
due to critical positions, were kept in country after men with six or  
seven months had returned to CONUS. Most of these detained individuals  
had shipped their hold baggage and made plans with their families for their  
return. But, instead, many sets of orders were cancelled.

3. Recommendations: That a concrete policy be established providing  
that once a Keystone unit begins deploying personnel, that no less favorable  
criteria be applied to other members of the unit.

B. Intelligence and Security:

1 Sapper Attacks.

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Test and Evaluation; 17 JAN 1974. Other requests  
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DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR  
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a. Observation: It has been observed that sapper attacks are preceded by detailed reconnaissance to include identifying anti-intrusion devices and determining the extent of protective wire. This may take place anywhere from three to seven days prior to the attack.

b. Evaluation: Sapper attacks are well planned and rehearsed prior to an attack. These attacks usually take place between 2400 hours and 0200 hours.

c. Recommendations:

(1) All security guard personnel must be continually alert to prevent the enemy from capitalizing on the element of surprise.

(2) Once the enemy has started his attack by fire and executes hit movements, maximum firepower from all friendly organic and supporting weapons must be immediately employed.

(3) Set patterns must be avoided to prevent the enemy from capitalizing on set routines.

(4) Reaction forces and tactical air support must be capable of responding instantly.

(5) Once an attack is imminent, all personnel not involved in the defense of the installation must take protective cover.

(6) An alternate means of communication must be available.

2. Continued Enemy Use of Old Base Camps:

a. Observation: In many cases, the enemy will reuse old base camps along routes of infiltration. In an area north of Kontum, friendly units were reconnoitering an old base camp when the enemy, unknowingly, revisited the same base camp, the encounter resulted in a POW and miscellaneous documents CIA.

b. Evaluation: It has been noted that the enemy forces utilize old and abandoned base camps to avoid detection.

c. Recommendations: Continued close surveillance by aerial observers and ground forces should be placed on old, partially destroyed bunker complexes. Any indication of renewed use of these bunkers should warrant reaction by air, ground or artillery elements. When possible, action should be taken to completely destroy all structures which can be of any use to the enemy. Units should set up a systematic plan for ambush and reconnaissance of known enemy base camps.

### 3. Enemy Caches.

a Observation: VC/NVA forces are frequently attempting to establish cache sites in staging areas of MR II.

(b) Evaluation: It has been noted that VC/NVA forces have established large caches of equipment and supplies in MR II areas and friendly units should be aware of cache detection. Cache detection and capture or destruction of enemy weapons, communication equipment, ammunition, food and other supplies in storage areas, continue to be an effective method to thwart impending VC/NVA offensive operations. These logistical areas are numerous, well dispersed and camouflaged with great care.

c Recommendations: Intelligence plays a vital role in cache detection. Captured sketch maps, even though not drawn to scale, can be corrected and correlated with previous cache finds and known trail networks, thus providing a key to cache locations. Interrogations of Hoi Chanh's POW's and civilian suspects have proven to be a lucrative source. Many civilians have been forced by the VC/NVA to work as laborers for transportation, construction and maintenance, and have considerable knowledge of cache locations. Some indications of cache locations are as follows:

- (1) High speed trails, single rut for bicycles, double rut for trucks.
- (2) Markings on trees.
- (3) Ant hill-like mounds of dirt around the base of clumps of bamboo.
- (4) Notes in an area which warn the VC/NVA of the approach of friendly troops.
- (5) Areas that have been boobytrapped.
- (6) Night Defense Positions receiving fire in the early morning hours or just as the troops move out from the positions, have indicated that there are caches in the area.

### 4. VC/NVA Anti-helicopter Techniques and Capabilities:

a Observation: Since 1 April 72, a total of 139 US helicopters have been shot at or hit by enemy small arms fire, automatic fire and AA weapons, resulting in the loss of aircraft and American lives.

b Evaluation: The importance which the VC/NVA place on providing anti-aircraft measures can best be judged by the large number of AA weapons and ammunition discovered during the first 30 days of the recent offensive in MR II.

c Recommendations: Some of the aircraft shot down have included single helicopters flying without gunship escort at altitudes which were well within the effective range of enemy weapons. The VC/NVA have a tendency to withhold fire on paired aircraft in favor of finding a single reconnaissance

aircraft and individual resupply helicopters. Aircraft have been shot at while on route or road reconnaissance missions. To effectively conduct a reconnaissance mission, to include bridge and culvert inspection, low level flight path that the aircraft becomes a vulnerable and likely target. A good "rule of thumb" to employ, therefore, is that anytime an aircraft is to operate for an extended period of time at an altitude within the effective range of enemy fire, it should have gunship support. The VC/NVA have proven themselves to be creatures of habit, however, they have discovered that aviators are also creatures of habit. All too often, helicopters use the same flight paths repeatedly, to go from one point to another. Some examples are: using the same flight paths into and out of landing zones and firebases; aligning flight paths with prominent terrain features such as treelines, rocks, rivers, valleys and ridgelines; and conducting reconnaissance missions at the same time every day. The enemy studies our habits just as we do his. In situations such as illustrated above, he can position himself for the kill. The helicopter that comes within his effective kill range can expect trouble. By not establishing predictable patterns of time and behavior, catastrophes can be avoided.

#### C. Operations - Lessons learned:

##### 1. Aircraft Utilization:

a. Observation - During the reporting period there were numerous reports of aircraft misutilization.

b. Evaluation: The primary problem appears to be that supported units do not carefully plan how the aircraft they are allocated will be used. Many hours of wasted blade time on all aircraft can be attributed directly to poor planning on the part of the customer. Army Aviation has always had a "can do" support attitude which is outstanding, however, we have entered into a time of diminishing assets which forces a continuing reappraisal of priorities. Our aviation assets must be carefully controlled so that the relatively few units left in Vietnam can do the enormous jobs which faces them. The effort put out by aviation units to get the maximum number of aircraft flyable must be matched by the supported units to consume blade time.

##### c. Recommendations:

(1) That supported unit commanders be made aware of the need to conserve aviation assets and that they be required to justify requests for aircraft and account for the time they were allotted.

(2) That a maximum effort be made on the part of aviation scheduling officers to consolidate missions to more efficiently utilize aircraft blade time.

##### 2. Pathfinder Detachments:

a. Observation: As US units withdraw from Vietnam, many pathfinder detachments are being stood down.

b. Evaluation: Pathfinders have unique skills that are needed when external loads are being carried by CH-47 aircraft. It has become apparent that ARVN are not experienced in rigging loads and that most US advisors also lack this kind of experience. This has caused serious problems where loads are not properly prepared for pickup. A great deal of wasted blade time has resulted.

c. Recommendations:

(1) That when US CH-47's are used, pathfinder qualified personnel be made available. This may necessitate retaining pathfinder detachments when other units are stood down.

(2) That selected US advisors in each ARVN Regt size unit receive pathfinder training.

(3) That a program to qualify ARVN personnel as pathfinders be established immediately.

3. Escape and Evasion.

a. Observation: US Army aircraft crews are not given enough survival instructions.

b. Evaluation: As US presence in Southeast Asia diminishes the likely load of downed aircraft crews having to escape and evade increases. There has been a sharp increase in the number of crew who have had to escape and evade. Quick pickup of downed crews is becoming the exception rather than the rule. This is a result of both the intensity of enemy fire in the crash site and the lack of available aircraft to conduct search and rescue.

c. Recommendations:

(1) That all Army aviation crews flying in South East Asia be assured complete survival gear to include survival radios for each crew member.

(2) That all Army aviators be required to attend escape and evasion courses similar to those available to USAF personnel. Survival aspects of the course should be oriented toward the area in which the aviator will be operating.

(3) That area commands establish survival schools oriented to the area of operations.

4. Maintaining Instrument Qualification.

a. Observation: There is a definite need as well as a requirement to maintain instrument proficiency for all aviators operating in Vietnam.

b. Evaluation: The number of instrument facilities has been greatly decreased in Vietnam as US units withdraw. However, there is still

a requirement for Army aviation to continue operating throughout the country. In remote areas, such as the highlands, where instrument conditions are particularly hazardous, instrument facilities are sorely lacking.

(c) Recommendations:

(1) That instrument facilities and aircraft instrument capabilities be upgraded

(2) That portable non directional beacon be placed at border ranger camps and several permanent FSB's.

5. Use of Fixed wing aircraft for C&C missions.

(a) Observation: During times of intense enemy activity higher unit commanders often feel the need to personally oversee the battle area. Often this is at the expense of a great deal of helicopter blade time.

(b) Evaluation: During many of the recent battles commanders at all levels have seen a need to be over the action as much as possible. Often the higher unit commanders are flown from relatively secure facilities, with airstrips suitable for fixed wing traffic available. A considerable amount of blade time is consumed at all levels of command in the performance of C&C duties.

(c) Recommendations:

(1) That fixed wing aircraft be utilized as much as possible for C&C type missions.

(2) That commanders at all levels reevaluate the requirement to actually be in the air over the action and limit this to only what is absolutely essential.

6. TRAINING.

(1) ANNUAL WRITTEN EXAMINATION:

(a) OBSERVATION: Examination scores are averaging 34-85% even though most aviators require the full four hours to complete the exam. 10% are requiring retakes to successfully complete the exam. The greatest problem areas are in the general flight rules area and those questions on cross-country and instrument flight.

(b) EVALUATION: Aviators are channelizing their skills and efforts toward one type of mission or flying to the almost total exclusion of the others.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: Increased command emphasis be placed on the maintaining of overall proficiency for pilots. It is that an instrument program to include both academics and flight instruction should be established at company level.



8. Logistics: NONE

9. Aircraft Maintenance.

1. Maintenance Personnel:

(a) Observation: Personnel turbulence during the phasedown considerably reduced the capability of this group to maintain its aircraft.

(b) Evaluation: As result of across the board tour curtailments, personnel strength in some companies fell to as low as 65% of authorized strength. These losses at the same time the flying hour program was increased, made it almost impossible to maintain acceptable availability standards. Efforts were made to alleviate these shortages by transferring personnel from units slated for standdown. A considerable amount of productive time is lost in transit time and integrating newly assigned personnel into maintenance jobs. It was finally determined that across the board curtailments could not continue and the 67 and 68 series MOS's were kept for full tours. This created a poor morale situation especially in those cases where these personnel had to fill slots vacated by other personnel whose tours were curtailed.

(c) Recommendation: That every effort be made to provide a stable personnel level and that all jobs be filled by the authorized MOS and skill level. Personnel stability could have been enhanced considerably by a phasedown of total strength thru standdown or relocation of complete units rather than across the board curtailments.

2. Aircraft Repair Parts Control.

(a) Observation: Current combat conditions necessitating additional maintenance have proven the definite lack of proper PLL control within the units. Investigation has proved that many times items which should have been in stock were not, therefore, requiring the submission of a NORS request, abusing the priority system and creating excessive unnecessary delays in aircraft availability.

(b) Evaluation: Inventory of PLL's within this group indicates that there is an excessive amount of hoarding. This is due to a lack of attention and proper management procedures which results in one unit having vitally needed parts laying on their shelves and in their conexes, while another unit has aircraft on the ground for lack of parts.

(c) Recommendations: It is absolutely necessary that all unauthorized parts be put back in the supply system if we are to maintain aircraft availability. Recent Keystone standdowns have revealed that there are thousands of critical parts in Vietnam that are not available to the units who need them.

3. CH-47 Maintenance Personnel.

(a) Observation: The TOE for a CH-47 unit authorized one E-6 67U20 as flight engineer. Due to the complexity of this aircraft, a highly trained and experienced maintenance lead man is a necessity.

(b) Evaluation: The personnel who are presently functioning in the role of OH-47 Flight Engineers are in grades E-4 and E-5. These people neither have the school background nor the field experience to provide them with the knowledge to supervise the maintenance required on such complex aircraft systems. This lack of experience creates a greater workload on the DSO. The DSO not being geared immediately to the unit's needs, causes prolonged down time for maintenance.

(c) Recommendation: That the TOE for OH-47 companies be revised to provide additional personnel with a high enough skill level to provide a higher degree of organizational maintenance support.

#### 4. Flying Hour Program.

(a) Observation: Failure to adjust operational commitments as units stood down resulted in a flying hour program above normal. This excessive flying resulted in the aircraft availability falling below USARV standards.

(b) Evaluation: As can be expected, a decrease in missions did not occur as units stood down and fewer aircraft were available. Following is the average time per OH-47 aircraft in the Assault Helicopter Companies for a three month period:

<u>CO</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
57th	102	98	76
60th	87	82	59
129th	80	52	67

The average Operational Ready Rate for the companies the last ten days of April were: 57th - 71%, 129th - 62%, and 60th - 43%. The USARV Std was 78%. During the same ten day period the average time to PMP in each of these units fell to less than 30 hours. Although a decrease in aircraft parts supply and increased average age of aircraft caused by turn-in of all low time birds for VNAF are factors, it is evident that the decrease in availability resulted directly from the excessive flying time in February and March. These were months of relatively little enemy activity. The drop in availability coincided with an increase in enemy activity in late April. This created a situation where units were backlogged with work and were having to fly every available aircraft. This precludes scheduling of aircraft for an even work flow.

(c) Recommendations: That established flying hour programs be exceeded only in combat emergencies.

#### G. Signal.

1 Observation: A significant increase in security violations by

radio was made evident during this reporting period. The reporting of a possible loss of a KY-28 was delayed by at least two weeks. A slight increase in jamming was reported on FM and HF frequencies.

2. Evaluation: Security violations were most often associated with tactical situation where urgency of the situations dictated fast action i.e. downed crews withdrawals, ground troops in contact, etc. At other times, frequencies are given in the clear by operations for convenience. The compromise of these frequencies is aiding the enemy in obtaining vital classified information; hence, the negligible amount of jamming on these frequencies. The delaying of any report involving possible compromise subjects any information passed via similar equipment code still in use, to complete compromise. It also gives the enemy the capability of studying US security procedures and initiating means to counteract their effect. Jamming is very effective in a tactical situation when time is of the essence. Medivac, search and rescue, and artillery/flight following frequencies for all military regions in RVN are listed in the Unclassified Republic of Vietnam Frequency publication. Search and rescue, and medivac frequencies can be easily jammed. Artillery warnings include location of fire, direction, range, time period, and occasionally impact coordinates can also be easily jammed. These frequencies are rarely jammed because of the valuable information the enemy can gather.

3. Recommendations: All commanders, pilots and operations personnel should be conscious of information given and disciplinary action should be taken against any deliberate violations. AKAC codes are available and supplied solely to assist in passing classified information via non-classified means. All reports concerning possible compromise should be forwarded immediately upon discovery. Regulations are very specific in reporting procedures. The Republic of Vietnam Frequency publication should be classified confidential in the same manner as SOI's. Also, tactical secure voice equipment should be used when feasible.

## II. Safety.

### 1. Adverse effects of standdown.

a. Observation: In January and February, several units in the 17th CAG were notified that they would either standdown or be redeployed. Prior to official notification, however, there were many rumors concerning which units would be chosen. This had an adverse effect on aviator attitudes and unit effectiveness.

b. Evaluation: Aviators, who has over six months in-country when their unit stooddown were allowed to rotate to CONUS. Therefore, a pilot with six months in country was suddenly "short." Whether he knew or just believed the rumor that his unit was going home, he suddenly considered the fact that he had about thirty days to go. In some pilots, this led to complacency and carelessness. In others, it led to a fear of flying and suddenly there were many excuses for not wanting to fly. Those aviators who missed the six month cutoff date, especially those who missed it by just a few days, were usually dejected and this affected their flying. There were ning aircraft

accidents during January and February. Two of them may have been caused indirectly by some of the stated problems.

c Recommendations: Caution must be used by commanders at all levels to prevent false rumors. Unit commanders must anticipate the problems encountered during standdown, and special emphasis should be placed on safety. No commander can tolerate an accident which can be attributed to "standdown-itis."

## 2 Proper use of school trained Safety Officers.

a Observation: More USC trained Aviation Safety Officers are being sent to RVN. In the 17th CAG, each unit has at least one school trained safety officer.

b Evaluation: Since this influx of qualified Safety Officers, there has been an increase in overall safety awareness. There is, however, a problem of proper utilization by the units. Since there is no authorized slot for the unit Safety Officer, he is too often not given ample time in which to set up an effective accident prevention program. Because he is usually a second tour aviator, his experience is often wanted in the field. Also, as in anything else, there are some trained Safety Officers who have discovered that they simply do not have an interest in this field.

c Recommendations: A Safety Officer, alone, cannot implement and make a successful accident prevention program work. Since it is the commander who is ultimately responsible for accident prevention, he should take a greater interest in his Safety Officer. Whenever possible, the Safety Officer should be free of extra duties so that he can first devote most of his time to establishing and running an effective accident preventive program.

## 1. Surgeon.

1 Observation: During the stand down of various units, feedback concerning progress being made was lacking.

2 Evaluation: Although no major problems have been encountered because of communication voids, it is felt that a constant system of routine feedback of information would have been helpful as other units stoodown.

3 Recommendations: That in the future, as units stand down, re-occurring events and problems should be compiled and transmitted to higher headquarters where the composite reports would be readily available as reference when later units begin their own standdowns.

## 3. Chaplain.

Recommendation: That when deemed as impractical or unnecessary for the continuing functions of chapel service, that equipment and materials be turned in.

- INCLOSURE 1

Unit Strength as of 30 Apr 72.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>		<u>ENLISTED</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASG</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASG</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASG</u>
*HHC 17th CAG	76	114	270	442	344	556
57th AHC	63	60	205	215	268	275
361st AHC	29	28	119	116	148	144
201st CAC	81	80	258	223	339	303
184th ASHC	39	45	218	198	257	243
60th	63	60	205	168	268	228
+129th	111	104	412	343	523	447
344th ADD	3	2	34	24	37	26
318th ADD	1	1	15	18	16	19
339th ADD	1	1	15	10	16	11
430th Med	1	1	8	5	9	6
546th Med	1	1	8	7	9	8
25th Med	1	1	7	6	8	7
94th Med	1	1	8	5	9	6
An Son TDA	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>62</u>
Totals	476	505	1859	1835	2335	2340

\*Includes MR II Cav Trp I Auth: 48 OFF AND 207 EM

+Includes MR II Cav Trp II Auth: 48 OFF AND 207 EM

Inclosure 2

Tuy Hoa Drug Suppression and Rehabilitation Center.

1. The Tuy Hoa Drug Suppression and Rehabilitation Center began operation on 11 June 1971 at the direction of COL Merryman, Commanding Officer, 17th Aviation Group (Combat). Its beginning was initiated as a result of a rapid increase in the drug abuse problem in the Tuy Hoa area and a sincere desire on the part of COL Merryman to assist the drug dependant soldier in his fight for freedom from the drug. COL Merryman selected CPT Calvin Boyles as the Center Director. With little knowledge on the particulars of how such a center should be run, but with a great amount of drive and a background in psychology, CPT Boyles immediately set about to organize and staff the Center. It began with a meager staff of five people and one building. CPT Boyles' military approach to a problem previously considered to be purely medical was unique. He invisioned a fourteen day program that consisted of two phases. The first week was phase I and was the withdrawal phase. During this period the individual underwent a thorough physical examination and received some assistance in his physical withdrawal. Toward the end of the week individual counseling was initiated. During the entire stay within the Center the individual was expected to maintain a soldierly bearing. This included the maintenance of his area and the overall upkeep of the Center. In this vain there was no attempt to allow the individual to use the Center as another escape from the real world. Each soldier was encouraged to cope with life as it is and not through the use of escape whether that might be the use of drugs or through the running away from life in any form. In the second week the individuals were given uniforms and along with them more freedom to venture outside the Center building. During this period group counseling was initiated and conducted twice daily along with increased individual counseling. To rebuild the physical fitness of the individual intensified physical activities were added to include swimming in the ocean, playing touch football, and sometimes just running around the block. Upon graduation the individual returned to his unit and until he departed country was considered to remain in the program. Each unit in the 17th CAG was to provide 2 unit counselors. These individuals were to be given five days of training at the Rehabilitation Center and then returned to their units. They maintained constant contact with each returnee and provided counseling and communication to the chain of command. As an additional aid to the units of 17th CAG the Center provided an education and field contact team. This team consisting of an officer and an NCO contacted the Center graduates in the companies and assisted the unit counselor in solving problems that might arise. They also conducted drug and alcohol education classes for the entire company. In December the 17th CAG was notified that two of their battalions would be redeployed and the Tuy Hoa installation deactivated with the 17th CAG Hq moving to Pleiku. The Center terminated activities on 18 December 1971.

2. Statistics on the operations of the Center from 11 June to 18 December show that:

- a. 205 individuals were accepted into the program.
- b. 151 individuals completed the 14 day program.
- c. 25 individuals were dismissed from the program for disciplinary reasons.
- d. 29 individuals voluntarily left the program prior to completion.
- e. 44 individuals returned to CONUS without coming up positive on any subsequent urine test.
- f. 45 individuals had confirmed positive urine tests after leaving the Center indicating a return to drug use. There is no information about the remaining individuals.
- g. The Center trained 35 unit counselors under the 5 day training program. In addition to these the Center trained 5 people to staff the Pleiku Rehabilitation Center and 10 people to staff the Nha Trang Center.
- h. The field contact team conducted classes from 1 November 71 to 14 December 1971 during which time 22 companies and detachments were contacted and a total of 2040 officers and E1 were "pitched to."
- i. Because of the unique development of the program and the Army-wide interest in the drug problem the Center director briefed 8 General Officers and 21 Colonels.

3. Some of the significant achievements of the Center include:

- a. The first center to approach the problem with a military model as opposed to a medical model.
- b. The Center that proposed and first implemented the 14 day program.
- c. The TDA proposed by the Center was accepted as the TDA for all USARV centers.
- d. The unit counselor and field representation concepts were proposed and first implemented by the Center and later adopted as standard by all USARV Centers.
- e. The second director, CPT Robert E. Jones, was selected to represent the rehabilitation centers of USARV at a world wide Army conference on drug and alcohol education and prevention held at Yale University from 6 Jan 72 to 22 Jan 72.

4. It has been acknowledged that the USARV Drug Program is significantly ahead of the rest of the U.S. Army in its efforts to stem the tide of drug

abuse and it can be seen that the 17th CAG and the Tuy Hoa Rehabilitation Center are the leaders of the USARV drug program. When the center closed, the staff personnel were transferred in-country to other existing rehabilitation centers, thereby utilizing the vast experience and knowledge gained over the months as they participated in and lead the drug rehabilitation program in USARV.



Inclosure 3

NOVEMBER 1971

	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO</u>
Rotary Wing	2911	6694	10622	1788
Fixed Wing	365	312	109	2
RW	4952	11317	17951	1224
FW	737	687	173	3
RW	4224	8325	15403	910
FW	560	487	136	5
RW	3242	7298	10908	530
FW	373	364	229	3
RW	2392	5218	6489	831
FW	<u>107</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>220</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	19863	41318	62240	5349

DECEMBER 1971

RW	3847	7797	7357	383
FW	86	92	196	3
RW	3075	6612	9294	1070
FW	105	123	286	5
RW	1110	2496	3871	331
FW	57	44	107	2
RW	3814	9188	16318	1259
FW	90	83	173	3
RW	3252	7926	15170	2579
FW	72	79	205	5
RW	666	1636	1720	261
FW	<u>17</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>36</u>	
Total	16191	36096	54733	5901

JANUARY 1972

	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO</u>
AT	2965	6730	10553	4410
BT	75	84	121	2
CT	3358	8089	11404	1379
DT	80	97	190	2
ET	3990	9736	18097	1922
FT	114	112	217	2
GT	3912	9410	15269	671
HT	116	148	210	3
IT	1550	3743	6684	229
PT	<u>72</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	15232	38231	62861	8622

FEBRUARY 1972

AT	1609	3729	7594	682
BT	46	50	121	2
CT	3512	8962	17021	1513
DT	118	118	205	2
ET	3226	7514	171	1317
FT	111	132	13426	1099
GT	2763	7550	208	2
HT	111	123	10636	889
IT	2090	5672	129	9
PT	<u>70</u>	<u>94</u>		
Total	13656	33944	49511	5515

# MARCH 1972

	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO</u>
RV	828	2311	4150	281
FW	22	35	47	1
RV	2884	7984	14482	1460
FW	88	113	287	2
RV	2864	8213	14007	1013
FW	83	116	310	3
RV	2941	8344	11814	3645
FW	75	103	302	3
RV	2690	8103	234	3
FW	73	86	13892	295
RV	464	1219	1669	190
FW	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>17</u>	
Total	13015	36631	61211	6905

# APRIL 1972

RV	2355	6695	11768	1327
FW	23	18	16	2
RV	2612	7207	11958	1209
FW	4	1	666	1543
RV	2685	6846	13426	1425
FW	5	7921	9536	467
RV	<u>1337</u>	<u>3405</u>		
Total	11912	32093	47370	5973

# TOTALS 17TH GP NOV-APR

	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO</u>
Total	90,869	218,313	337,926	38,265

Inclsure 4.

(2) Camp defense: On 20 Jan 72 17th Group Headquarters moved to Artillery Hill Army Installation north of Pleiku . Due to the lack of any US ground troops on this installation to provide security for the Group Headquarters as well as for the overall installation, the mission of security was assumed by the 17th AG (C). In order to provide for the security of the installation, Local National (LN) guards were employed extensively. These LN guards were utilized primarily on the outer perimeter. Based on the tactical situation and enemy threat, these LN's were supplemented on varying degrees by US personnel drawn from tenant units occupying the installation. To compliment this basic perimeter defense guard a reaction force was also formed. It was composed entirely of personnel drawn from group assets and from other units stationed on Artillery Hill. To augment the perimeter defense, positions were constructed in depth around the perimeter and rehearsals were conducted to insure that in the event of an attack, positions were properly and effectively manned by all available personnel. To further provide for the security of the station, armed helicopters from nearby Camp Holloway were utilized. In addition, ARVN artillery was coordinated and controlled by the Pleiku Installation Defense Coordination Center. Physically present on the installation itself was a tactical operations center which was operated on a twenty-four hour basis. This TOC under the control of the installation security officer, coordinated and controlled the mission of the physical defense of the installation. Upon moving to Camp Holloway on 10 April, 17th AG (C) Headquarters was again faced with lack of adequate ground combat troops to provide security. For this reason LN guards previously employed at Artillery Hill were utilized once more. Defensive plans and coordination for the defense of Camp Holloway were very much similar to those employed on Artillery Hill. The primary difference, though, was a matter of size. Because of the size of Camp Holloway as compared to that of Artillery Hill and because of the available allocations for Local National guards, subordinate aviation units, and other units on the Holloway installation had to be levied more heavily in order to provide for and to augment the defense of the installation.

Inclosure 5.

Unit Losses:

(a) 10th Avn Bn (Cbt)

- (1) 1 Dec 71, 183rd Reconnaissance Airplane Company was inactivated.
- (2) 31 Dec 71, 92nd Assault Helicopter Company was inactivated.
- (3) 1 Jan 72, A Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry, was detached, and sent back to 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry at An Son.
- (4) 1 Jan 72, 60th Assault Helicopter Company was reassigned to the 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry.
- (5) 20 Jan 72, the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company was inactivated.
- (6) 30 Jan 72, seven (7) officers and ten (10) E1 were redeployed with HHC 10th Combat Aviation Battalion to Fort Lewis Washington.

(b) 52nd Avn Bn (Cbt)

- (1) 24 Dec 71 the 219th Reconnaissance Airplane Company was inactivated.
- (2) 15 Mar 72 3rd Assault Helicopter Company and the 68th Assault Support Helicopter Company were inactivated.
- (3) 27 Apr 72, D Troop 7/17 Cavalry was inactivated.
- (4) 27 Apr 72, HHC 52nd Avn Bn (Cbt) reduced to zero strength and the colors were deployed to the Republic of Korea.

(c) 268th Avn Bn (Cbt)

- (1) 30 Nov 71, 59th Assault Helicopter Company was inactivated.
- (2) 23 Dec 71, 238th Assault Helicopter Company was inactivated.
- (3) 23 Dec 71, 225th Surveillance Airplane Company was inactivated.
- (4) 27 Dec 71, 134th Assault Helicopter Company was inactivated.

## Inclosure 6.

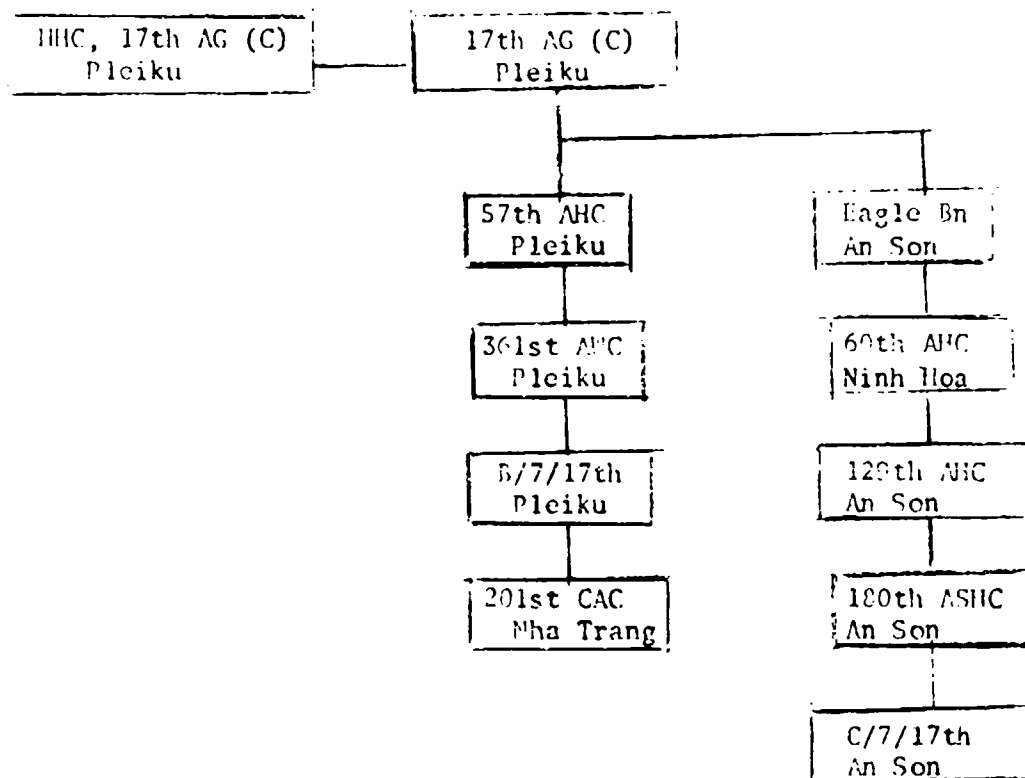
### SIGNIFICANT OPERATIONS

1. The Enemy Easter offensive and the Battle of Kontum. During the month of February and March there was a significant build up of enemy forces in Kontum Province. Units of the 17th CAG conducted operations in support of the 22d ARVN Div and the 2nd Abn Bgd who were conducting the defense of Kontum. Friendly forces were deployed in FSB's along a ridge line known as "Rocket Ridge" ZA 0709 to YB 9319. The 22d Div Fwd HQs was located at Tanh Canh ZB 052 219. The 2 Abn Bgd HQs was located at Vo Binh ZB 1505. Friendly forces were apposed by elements of the B-3 Front, the 2nd NVA Div and the 320 NVA Div. The defensive plan was based on keeping the enemy forces west of Rocket Ridge and away from Kontum city. B Troop 7th Cavalry 17th Squadron conducted extensive reconnaissance missions in the area to locate enemy forces. U.S. Army Aviation assets worked in conjunction with VNAF helicopters conducting C&C and resupply type missions. Enemy activity increased in the area beginning on 1 April. The FSB's located on rocket ridge came under intense artillery and ground attacks. Gunships from the 52nd Avn Bn flying in support of ARVN units in contact accounted for 200 KBA on 3 Apr. As the battle developed increased pressure was applied to friendly positions eventually forcing ARVN units to withdraw. On 24 Apr the 22nd ARVN Div Fwd HQs located at Tanh Canh was attacked by enemy tanks. ARVN elements defending the HQs compound withdrew leaving U.S. advisors in the compound. After being driven from the camp the U.S. advisors were airlifted to Dak To by Mr Vann, SA for II Corps. They were picked up there by UH-1H's from the 57th ASHC. One of these aircraft was shot down south of Dak To at ZB 012 210. The aircraft burned on impact and the fate of the crew and passengers was unknown until five survivors were rescued two weeks later. ARVN units withdrawn to the vicinity of Kontum city in order to establish a perimeter around the city. During the month of April the intensity of the action is evidenced by the fact that 17th CAG lost 18 aircraft due to combat damage in the Pleiku and Kontum area. On the last day of this reporting period the battle for Kontum was still in progress.

2. During this period one major operation was conducted in the An Khe Pass area. The units involved were the 129th AHC and 180th ASHC in support of the Capitol ROK Infantry Div. The An Khe operation began on 11 April when a VC sapper element hit the ROK 1st Cav Regt compound. NVA forces in the vicinity of the An Khe pass attempted to cut QL 19. The Capitol ROK Inf Div conducted combat assaults into the area and after several weeks of hard fighting dislodged the enemy and reopened QL 19.

Inclosure 7.

ORGANIZATION



Inclosure 8.

SATION LIST

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>APD</u>
17th AG (C)		
1st & 1st Co	Pleiku	96318
57th AHC	Pleiku	96494
361st AHC	Pleiku	96494
3/7/17th	Pleiku	96494
201st CAC	Nha Trang	96350
25th Med Det	Nha Trang	96350
94th Med Det	Pleiku	96494
344th ADD	Pleiku	96494
Eagle Bn	An Son	96494
60th AHC	Ninh Hoa	96240
120th AHC	An Son	96494
150th ASHC	An Son	96494
C/7/17th	An Son	96494
318th ADD	An Son	96240
339th ADD	An Son	96226
546th Med	An Son	96226



Inclosure 9

AIRCRAFT STATUS AS OF 30 APRIL 72

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TYPE A/C</u>	<u>TOE/PTOE</u>	<u>BDE FILL</u>	<u>ON HAND</u>
17th CAG	UH-1H	0	2	2
	OH-5C	2	0	0
201st ACh	UH-1H	25	25	17
	OH-5C	10	10	12
	CH-47	6	0	0
	U-6A	0	2	2
60th AHC	AH-1G	6	0	0
	UH-1H	23	21	18
129th AHC	AH-1G	6	0	6
	UH-1H	23	23	23
C Trp	OH-6A	10	10	10
	AH-1G	9	8	8
	UH-1H	8	8	8
180th ASHC	OH-5C	2	2	0
	CH-47	16	16	22
B Trp	OH-6A	10	8	7
	AH-1G	9	7	7
	UH-1H	8	8	0
57th AHC	AH-1G	6	6	8
	UH-1H	23	23	30
361st AHC	AH-1G	12	10	10
	UH-1H	0	0	1

AVRAGC (19 May 72) 1st Ind

3 July 1972

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 17th Aviation Group (CPT) for Period Ending 30 April 1972, RUS CS FOR-65 (R3) (U)

17A Headquarters, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO San Francisco 96384

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam/MACV Support Command, ATTN: AVHCG-PST, APO San Francisco 96375

1. After review of the Operational Reports Lessons Learned 17th Combat Aviation Group by all staff sections the following comments are submitted.

2. Reference ORLL 17th CAG:

Paragraph C3, page 14 discusses the need for more survival training to be given to aircrews in Southeast Asia. During the week of 14-21 May an Airforce escape and evasion briefing team was utilized to conduct a combined briefing and class on escape and evasion. This team was sent to all groups in South Vietnam with an overall goal of establishing a training program conducted by each group for each crewmember assigned. Informal investigation has disclosed a lack of survival radios in local units, and that floating stocks were depleted in most areas. This was due to the sudden increase in demand after a period of non-interest. Survival radios and other equipment are enroute and will be distributed to field units as soon as possible.

3. Reference: ORLL 17th CAG:

Paragraph C4, page 14, discusses the need to maintain instrument proficiency for all aviators operating in Southeast Asia and the need to upgrade instrument facilities to include the possibility of installing small tactical radio beacons in remote ranger camps to aid in area navigation. In order to better the instrument training program the flight standards section is dispatching its examiner to each group to aid in the development of a viable instrument program tailored for each units needs and facilities. In addition a large quantity of programed text and instrument guides have been obtained from Fort Rucker. These texts have been divided into training packets for distribution to individual commands. As to upgrading of instrument facilities none is being contemplated due to the draw down of U. S. personnel in RVN. The installation of small tactical beacons in remote border camps would not significantly improve instrument navigation due to the reduction in the scope of allied operations in those areas and the reduction of support for these beacons.

4. Reference: ORLL 17th CAG:

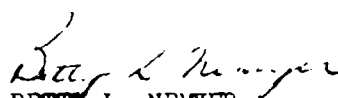
Paragraph E1, page 15, discusses the fact that the average score obtained on the annual writ has been 84-85% not including 10% of personnel requiring a retake. The

AVBAGC (15 May 72) 1st Ind 3 July 1972

SUBJECT: Operational Reports-Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 17th Aviation Group  
(OBT) for Period Ending 30 April 1972, RGS CS FOR-55 (R3) (U)

major problems seem to be in general regulations and cross country instrument flight planning. As mentioned in the above paragraph an active information and training program has been initiated utilizing training material received from Fort Rucker.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
BETTY L. NEMYER  
CW2, USA  
Asst AG

28 AUG 1972

AFMDC-00 (15 May 72) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 17th Aviation Group (OGT) for Period Ending 30 April 1972, RCS CSFOR-65 (R3)

Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam/MACV SUPCOM, APO San Francisco 96375  
28 AUG 1972

TO: Commander-in-Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GROUP-FD, APO San Francisco 96558

This Headquarters has reviewed the subject ORLL and submits the following comments.

a. Concur with paragraph A, Section II.

This headquarters established a firm guidance with USARV message 111040Z May 1972, subject: Personnel Guidance for Increment XII, and will continue issuing such messages.

b. Concur with paragraph F(1), Section II.

Critical MOS selectivity must be practiced in any curtailment policy. This headquarters established such selectivity in USARV message 111040Z May 1972, subject: Personnel Guidance for Increment XII. Selectivity will be continually emphasized in future increments.

c. Nonconcur with paragraph F(3), Section II.

The current MTOE for the 180th Assault Support Helicopter Company, MTOE 25001503 authorizes sixteen (16) 67U2F flight engineers in the grade of E-6 (one per aircraft). It also authorizes sixteen (16) E-5's, with MOS of 67U2F, and 30 E-5's and 33 E-4's with the 67U20 MOS (The base TOE 1-258G authorizes 16 E-6's, 46 E-5's and 46 E-4's with the 67U20 MOS).

The current document authorizes sufficient maintenance supervisory personnel, with the required skilled levels, to maintain the 16 transport and two observation helicopters authorized. The fact that personnel were not available to fill these authorized positions is not a sufficient reason to change the authorized skill levels. By raising the skill levels, even more difficulty may be experienced in obtaining personnel fill. This appears to be a personnel replacement problem not a documents authorization problem.

d. Concur with paragraph G, Section II.

The Republic of Vietnam frequency publications issued by MACV and this headquarters are classified CONFIDENTIAL.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

SP:

1- CSFOR, DA, WASH, D.C. 20310

1- CG, 1st Avn Bde (2d Ind), APO 96384 Assistant Adjutant General

GPOP-FD (15 May 72) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, HQ 17th Aviation Group  
(Cbt), Period Ending 30 April 1972, RCS CSFOR-65 (R3)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558

13 OCT 1972

TO: HQDA (DAFD-ZA) WASH DC 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

9 Incl  
nc

*Michael A. Welch*

MICHAEL A. WELCH  
2LT, AGC  
Asst AG

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# DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

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